

Remarks

Claim 96 is rejected as anticipated by U.S. 5,084,018 to Tsao. In the Advisory Action mailed June 1, 2007, Examiner states that Tsao '018 shows "...the plunger seal directly contacting shoulder 26." Applicant traverses the rejection and amends claim 96 to more particularly recite that the plunger seal has a forwardly facing surface that directly contacts the rigid stop surface of the body following release of the retractable needle, which is not disclosed by Tsao '018. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

Claim 113 is rejected as obvious based upon U.S. 5,084,018 to Tsao in view of U.S. 5,304,138 to Mercado. In the Advisory Action, Examiner states that "...elements 19 and 34 are integral and meet the limitation of the annular shoulder as claimed." Applicant traverses the rejection and the Examiner's statement. Even if elements 19 and 34 are integral, the resultant element as disclosed by Tsao '018 fails to meet the limitation recited in the claim that the annular shoulder is "disposed adjacent to *and define[s]* the small diameter open end *at the narrowest part of the barrel.*" In this paper, Applicant further amends claim 113, from which claims 114-116 depend, to more particularly recite that the compression spring has a forward end and the annular shoulder is adjacent to the forward end of the spring, thereby further distinguishing the claimed invention from that disclosed by Tsao '018. Mercado '138 does not disclose a needle retraction mechanism or the structure recited above, and does not remedy the deficiencies of Tsao '018. Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection.

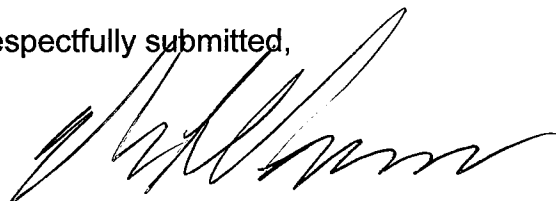
Claims 122-141, newly added, are well supported by the specification and drawings, and are believed to patentably distinguish over the prior art.

Applicant again requests Examiner's consideration in granting Applicant a personal interview prior to issuing another office action if Examiner intends to again reject any of the claims as now presented.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional required fee or credit any overpayment to the Locke Liddell & Sapp LLP deposit account no. 12-1781.

All pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance, and Applicant respectfully requests that a Notice of Allowance be issued.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Monty L. Ross', written over a horizontal line.

Monty L. Ross
Registration No. 28,899
(214) 740-8519

June 18, 2007
LOCKE LIDDELL & SAPP LLP
2200 Ross Ave., Suite 2200
Dallas, Texas 75201-6776
(214) 740-8000 Telephone
(214) 756-8519 Facsimile